

**BEAUFORT COUNTY RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND
PRESERVATION BOARD**

The regular meeting of the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board (hereafter known as the Board) was held on October 8, 2009 in the Conference Room at Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Building at 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Steve Riley (Chair)
Ms. Gloria Cartwright (Vice-Chair)
Ms. Selena Brown
Mr. Pete Dawson
Mr. York Glover
Ms. Janice Johnson
Mr. Ed Pappas
Mr. Jacob Preston
Mr. Joseph Vercellotti

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Malcolm Goodridge
Mr. Ray Tudor

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Tony Criscitiello, Planning Director
Ms. Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner
Mr. Glenn Stanford, Mr. Russ Marane, Conservation Consulting Co.

GUEST PRESENT:

Ms. Michaela Twomey, CCC
Mr. Jerry Stewart, County Councilman
Mr. Paul Sommerville, County Councilman
Mr. Joe Croley
Mr. Reed Armstrong, Coastal Conservation League

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Steve Riley called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

Chairman Riley asked if there were any changes to the Agenda and there were none.

Chairman Riley asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the September 10, 2009 Board meeting. Hearing none, Mr. Dawson made a motion and Mr. Pappas seconded the motion to accept the Minutes from the September 10, 2009 Board meeting.

Motion carried.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Stanford led the discussion of the 2010 bond referendum with a power point presentation. The last referendum was in 2006 and out of 50 million dollars we have 19 million left to spend. 2010 would be the first and only chance to ask for a referendum until 2012. We need to start educating the public and officials about the program as soon as possible. Out of the 19 million left, 2 million is earmarked for approved projects that are waiting to close and 7.2 million is earmarked for projects under option. There are approximately 20 other projects in negotiation. The referendum process includes a recommendation from the Rural and Critical Board, council approval, drafting of a new ordinance, and draft of a referendum question. Mr. Stanford mentioned that the Board should look into updating the 2006 Greenprint as part of this process. Some of the purposes for the 2006 Rural and Critical Lands Program Ordinance were protection of rural and critical lands, preservation of open space, and preservation of character of rural lands. Some of the new provisions for the 2010 bond could be funding for planning and development, funding for maintenance of passive parks sites, and revision of the 2006 Greenprint.

Councilman Sommerville said he was not sure of the feeling of Council at this time but agrees that the market for property right now is great. Councilman Stewart said that it is going to depend on what happens with taxes but from his perspective we need the funds. Mr. Stanford stated that first the Board needs to go through the thinking process and work with County Council. The purpose of this meeting is to get some ideas going and have a discussion. Councilman Stewart asked if this program could be self sustaining by being able to sell some of these properties. Ms. Cartwright thinks that the selling of land would be a hard idea to get across to the public. Mr. Stanford asked what if we buy property, take 80% of the development rights, sell it, and bring in money for the program? Ms. Brown also thinks that people will not understand the idea and think that the Board is investors, not land protectors. Chairman Riley said it would be an education process but a tough one. If done right, you can extend your money for the program. Mr. Preston said that one perceived value is land is being taken out of development and other land being sustained or increasing in value.

Mr. Dawson asked if an endowment could be established. Then the Board could get some small funds started that could grow over time. The Board needs to take advantage of all fund raising opportunities. Mr. Pappas stated that the Board needs to show the public that we are researching other opportunities besides a new bond. One way to do this would be to have a workshop to discuss this with the public. Chairman Riley stated that as we go through this process with the public, the meeting should be video taped.

Councilman Stewart said that the land we have bought with the military is good for business but is now restricted. He thinks it is a tremendous waste of revenue for taxes and wonders if that part could be taken out of the program since Beaufort does not have a lot of land for economic development. Chairman Riley said that the Board could talk with the military and reevaluate how we work those deals and bring in partners such as the Economic Development Network, school district, BJWSA, etc. Another issue Mr. Criscitiello stated is that the definition of passive parks needs to be reevaluated.

Mr. Stanford said that the Board needs to decide how to move forward from this point. Should the Board do a resolution until everyone gets a feel on how things will go? Should the Board look for some grant money to redo the Greenprint? Chairman Riley said that there should be money in the program to fund a new Greenprint if grants are not available. Mr. Armstrong said that the Greenprint should coordinate with the comp plans and include towns and cities. It should also include a move towards a Form Based Code using the Future Land Use map. Whatever the Board decides, Mr. Stanford would like to present a report at County Council in December to give them an update of the Board's ideas and progress. Councilman Sommerville recommended that the new bond and Greenprint ideas should be discussed at the Natural Resources Committee soon and Mr. Stanford agreed.

Mr. Pappas wondered if maintenance was not going to be asked for in the bond, the Board needs to look at another way to achieve maintenance for these properties. Mr. Criscitiello asked Mr. Stanford if there was a way to work on gift monies to be used for maintenance. Mr. Stanford said the answer is yes; gifts can be directed to whatever project the giver chooses as long as it stays within the program.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Riley entertained a motion by Mr. Preston, seconded by Mr. Vercellotti, to adjourn the Open Session at 3:52 p.m. and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters associated with property acquisitions. **The vote was unanimous to enter into Executive Session.**

Note: Chairman Riley left at 4:00 p.m.

The Board re-entered Open Session at 4:54 p.m.

The following to be presented to Natural Resources Committee:

Mr. Vercellotti made a motion; seconded by Mr. Pappas, to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Parcel B under the terms and conditions as recommended by CCC, as discussed in Executive Session. **The motion carried.**

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Vice-Chairman Cartwright entertained a motion at 4:55 p.m. from Mr Pappas, seconded by Ms. Brown, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Submitted by: Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner

Approved:

Steve Riley, Chairman, Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land
Preservation Board

Date: _____